Government of Saskatchewan

Annual Report 1986-87

Saskatchewan Public Service Commission

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I. Letters of Transmittal

Lorne H. Hepworth
Minister

March 21, 1988

The Honourable F.W. Johnson
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan
Government House
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Sir:

In accordance with Subsection Two of Section Six of *The Public Service Act*, I have the honour to submit the report of the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987.

Respectfully submitted,

L.H. Hepworth

Lorne H. Hepworth
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Public Service Commission

John D. McPhail
Chairman

March 21, 1988

The Honourable Lorne H. Hepworth
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Public Service Commission
Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Sir:

It gives me pleasure to submit herewith the report of the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987.

May I take this opportunity to acknowledge the assistance of my fellow Commissioners and the diligent work of the staff of the Public Service Commission.

Yours sincerely,

John D. McPhail

John D. McPhail
Chairman
Saskatchewan Public Service Commission

II. Introduction

The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission operates under authority of *The Public Service Act*, serving as the central personnel agency for the Saskatchewan public service.

The Commission performs a number of services and regulatory functions. The principal functions are:

- Recruitment for and staffing of all permanent positions within the classified service.
- Classification of positions.
- Development and administration of classification and compensation plans.
- Negotiation and administration of collective bargaining agreements.
- Provision of advice on human resource matters to departments and agencies in the public service.
- Staff development.
- Maintenance and provision of human resource information regarding public service employees.
- Development of human resource policies and procedures within the public service.

The Commission itself comprises five individuals. As Chairman of the Commission, John McPhail also serves as chief executive officer of the government's central personnel agency. This position is a full-time appointment. The other Commission members, appointed on a part-time basis, include Isabelle Butters (C.M., General Manager of the Weyburn Co-operative and former Mayor of Weyburn); William Fyles (former Chairman and Secretary of the Public Service Commission); Harold Hoffman (President of the Service Employees' International Union [SEIU] Local 333, President of the SEIU Prairie Regional Council and Vice-President of the Canadian Central and Western Conference of the SEIU); and Roland Muir (Director of Research Services, University of Saskatchewan).

The five Commissioners represent the public interest in the ongoing process of improving human resource management and administration within the Saskatchewan public service.

During the year under review, the Commission met ten times and heard three out-of-scope classification appeals. The Commission also acted upon one dismissal appeal.

From left to right: Harold Hoffman, Roland Muir, Isabelle Butters, John McPhail. Not pictured: William Fyles.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is structured into five Divisions and maintains a Saskatoon Regional Office to assist in serving the needs of all government departments, their employees and members of the public.

In 1986-87, the Public Service Commission was given a key responsibility in the development and implementation of strategies which would enhance the Government's commitment to reduce a growing deficit. These strategies are designed to reduce the size of the Saskatchewan public service by 2,000 positions, while ensuring that essential front line services are maintained. Initiatives proposed by the PSC emphasized a humane and compassionate approach to the downsizing exercise, to ensure that employees affected by job abolitions would be treated in a fair and equitable manner. Working in close cooperation with departments, the PSC recommended that priority be placed on voluntary options and measures which would minimize the effect on employees, such as:

- a voluntary Early Retirement Program;
- the abolition of vacant and redundant positions;
- management of attrition; and
- restrictions on hiring.

During the year under review, the Commission launched a series of over 30 special seminars throughout the Province to assist employees in reaching a decision on the early retirement option. Provision was also made for extensive outplacement and counselling services for all employees affected by job abolition.

During 1986-87, the Commission responded to the challenge of a changing environment by modifying many of its services. For example, all staffing services are now centrally coordinated by the Commission, including the recruitment for non-permanent positions, a responsibility previously carried out by departments. In-service hiring is being encouraged in an effort to provide career opportunities for employees at all levels. Emphasis will be placed on assisting employees who may require retraining, career counselling or placement as a result of job changes. The comprehensive staff development programs, aimed at all levels of employees, will continue to be a priority.

The implementation of measures to assist in reducing the provincial deficit will result in the need to rejuvenate the Saskatchewan public service. Enhanced opportunities will arise for promoting younger employees, for reinforcing employment equity programs and for identifying job-sharing opportunities.

The implementation of an integrated personnel/payroll system will allow for greater control of position establishment and job classifications, in addition to providing up-to-date employee and position data bases.

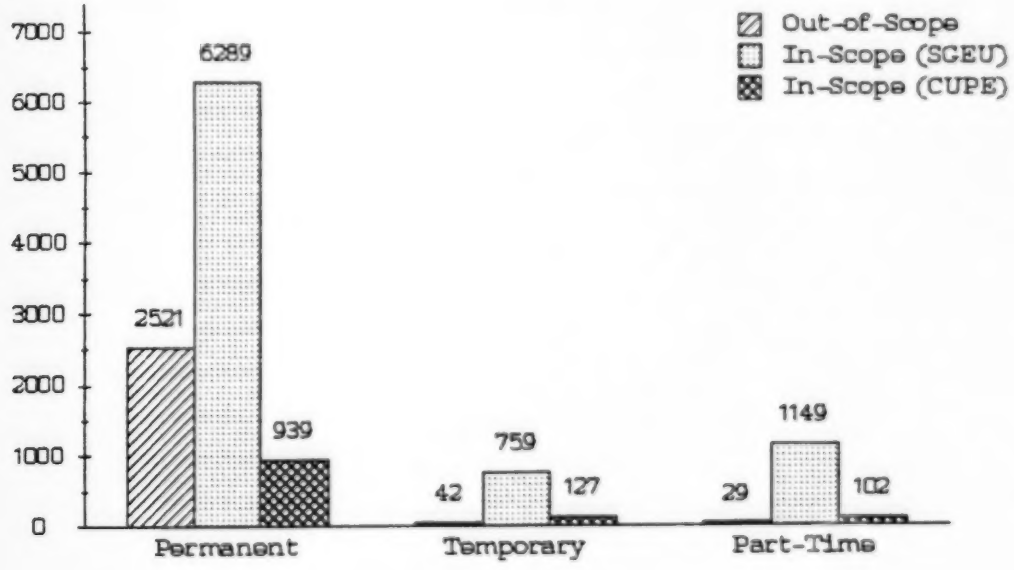
III. The Public Service

In March, 1987, the Saskatchewan Public Service comprised 9,749 permanent, full-time, 1,280 part-time and 928 temporary employees, for a total of 11,957 employees. There were also 2,061 casual and labour service employees.

Among the permanent, part-time and temporary public service employees, 2,592 were out-of-scope and 9,365 were in-scope. Among the in-scope positions, the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union (SGEU) represented a total of 8,197 employees, while the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 600 represented 1,168 employees.

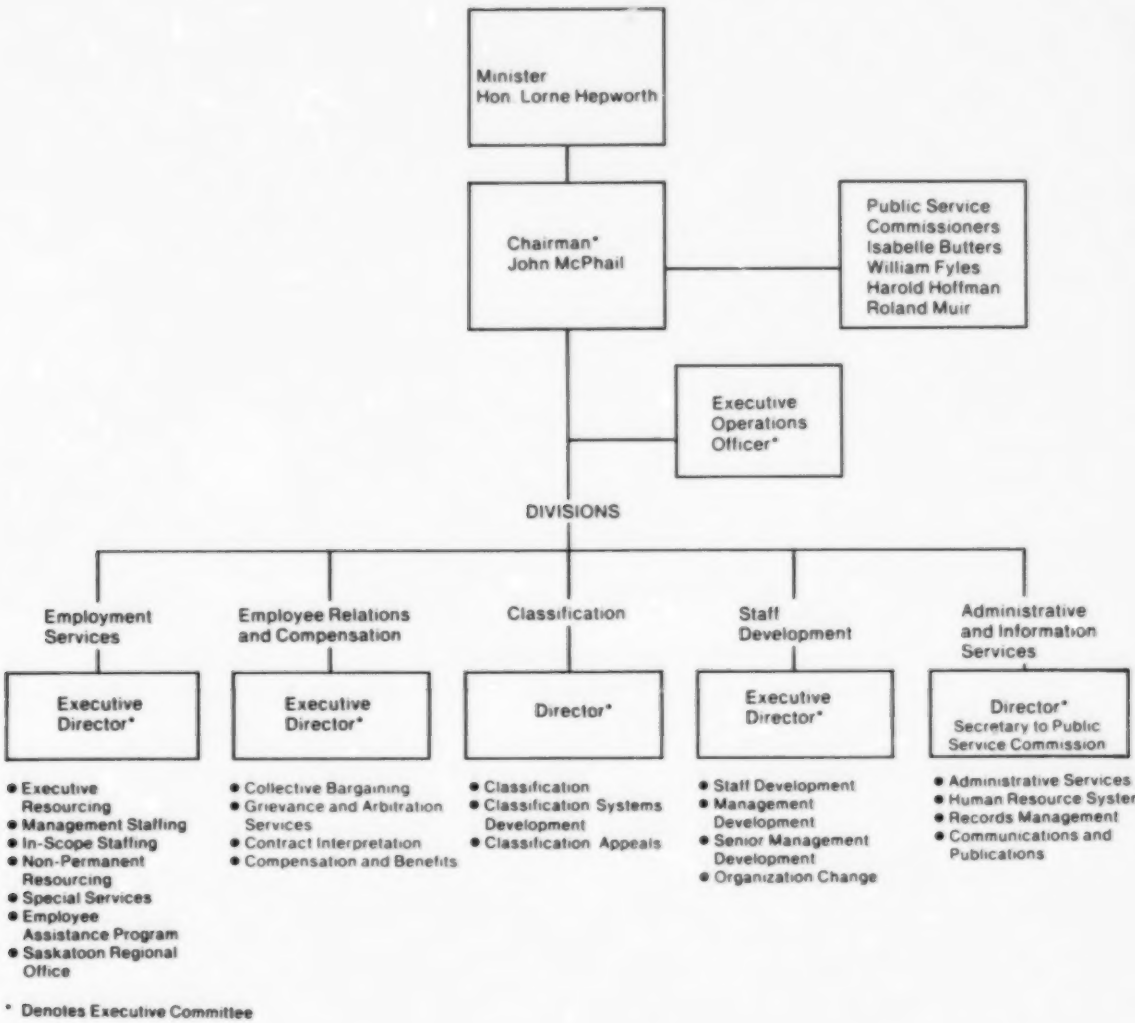
The major challenge ahead will be to regroup and reorganize following restraint and to manage more effectively and efficiently with fewer resources in meeting the demands of the future.

Scope of Permanent, Part-Time and Temporary Employees (as at March 31, 1987)



IV. The Public Service

The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission has a staff complement of 114.9 person years and is structured as follows:



* Denotes Executive Committee

V. Our Mission

The approved Mission Statement for the Public Service Commission in Fiscal Year 1986-87 appears below:

Saskatchewan
Public Service Commission
Our Mission

To represent the public interest by providing professional Human Resource Services in an effective and ethical manner.

Our Goals

We believe employees want to serve the people of Saskatchewan to the best of their abilities and that their full potential can be achieved if our services:

- *Ensure that appointment is based on merit.*
- *Offer opportunities for employees to develop their knowledge and skills.*
- *Promote a participative work environment that will enhance employee performance and development.*
- *Ensure that employees receive recognition based on performance.*
- *Demonstrate leadership and innovation in improving human resource management.*
- *Provide fair treatment and equal opportunity for all individuals.*
- *Anticipate and meet service requirements in a timely, responsive and cost-effective manner.*
- *Respond to changing employee needs and government priorities.*

Leadership and Service

VI. Managing in Times of Restraint

Downsizing

The ongoing downsizing of the Saskatchewan public service since 1984 was intensified, as evidenced by the government's announcement to eliminate approximately 2,000 positions. The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission endeavoured to design plans for the managing of downsizing, which would meet the government's objective, while ensuring that employees were treated fairly.

To achieve the established reduction goal and minimize lay-offs, priority was placed on a range of voluntary measures, such as an early retirement program and deletion of vacant positions, government-wide.

Vacancy Management

The PSC, in cooperation with all departments and agencies, identified 512 unencumbered vacant positions across the public service which could be abolished without affecting services or impacting upon employees. The Commission also proposed guidelines on how future vacancies occuring through attrition should be staffed. Vacant positions may be allocated to other departments, where necessary, in accordance with program needs and government priorities. The emphasis remains on maintaining essential programs and front-line services.

Voluntary Early Retirement Program 1987

In preparation for the voluntary Early Retirement Program 1987, the Public Service Commission offered 31 special Early Retirement Seminars and Pension Briefings throughout the province for employees of executive government and selected Treasury Board Crown Corporations. The objective was to assist eligible employees in arriving at an informed decision. The sessions were attended by more than 1,900 employees and spouses.

Department Amalgamation and Reorganization

An ongoing review of government programs and departmental responsibilities resulted in the decision to amalgamate a number of major departments and agencies.

The Public Service Commission will take an active part in assisting those departments and agencies in their restructuring initiatives, especially in the areas of job evaluation and employee relations.

Crown Corporation Transfers

The government concluded that some executive government operations would be more efficiently handled by a crown corporation. To that end, the Department of Supply and Services, with more than 1,000 employees, was transformed into the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. Other executive government operations transferred to new or existing crown corporations include, for example, the Saskatchewan Property Assessment Authority to the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency and the Highway Traffic Board to the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation.

The Commission's main responsibility in these processes was to facilitate the transfer of employees to the new organizations and agencies, negotiate letters of understanding with the bargaining agent and maintain reemployment lists of former employees eligible for call-backs to the Saskatchewan public service.

Downsizing Measures

While reductions will be achieved to a large extent through voluntary measures, job abolitions and lay-offs will also be necessary to reach set objectives.

In keeping with the Commission's goal of humane treatment for all employees, planned severance packages have been enhanced for non-union employees who will face job abolition. In-scope employees, unable to retain employment via the bumping process, will have the option of remaining on a government-wide reemployment list with priority call-back rights, for two years. In addition, professional outplacement and job relocation counselling services will be provided to all employees.

VII. Creating Opportunity

Although restraint could be viewed as a negative or regressive measure, challenges for innovative approaches and opportunities for rejuvenation often result. The necessity of filling a number of vacancies created through early retirement will provide some opportunities for upward movement. The new focus on rebuilding and restructuring for the future will offer a variety of opportunities and challenges for employees to acquire new skills and experience, out of which new ideas and new approaches will emerge.

1. A Strategized Approach to Staff Development

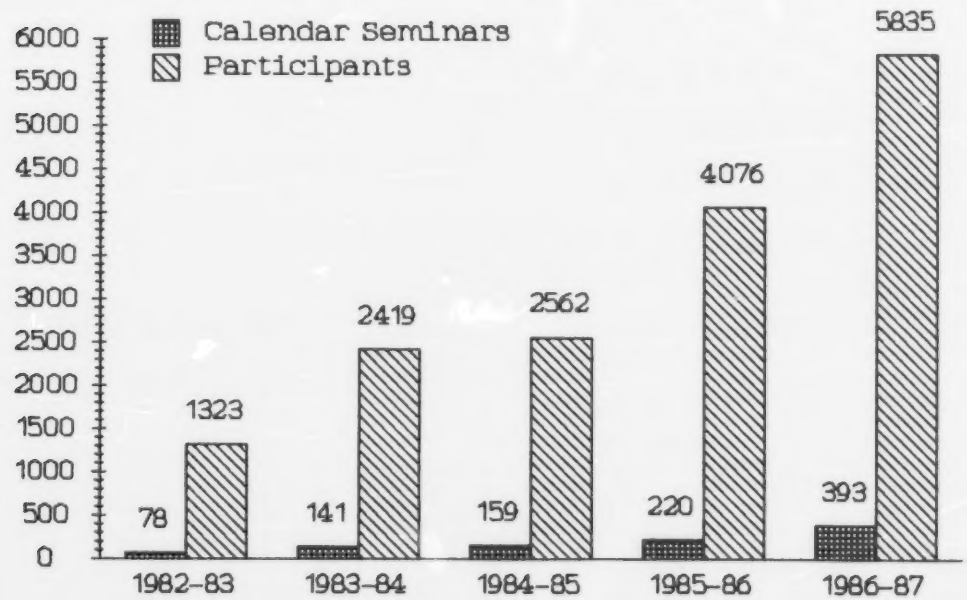
The demand for staff development seminars increased significantly during 1986-87. Compared to 220 seminars offered in 1985-86, 393 seminars were offered in 1986-87, with a total of 5,835 public service employees participating in the programs.

The main challenge for the Commission will be to assist departments in the reorganization process and to maintain high employee morale and productivity. Towards this end, an enhanced approach to staff development has been developed which encompasses consulting services to individual departments. The thrust of all developmental endeavours focuses on the future and anticipates the demands of a changed environment.

Senior Management Development

In 1986-87, twelve new candidates were admitted to the Senior Management Development Program. The program is designed to develop high-potential managers for more senior responsibilities. During the year under review, 36 employees were enrolled in the program, which consists of seven intensive modules, guided self-study, seminars and a variety of developmental opportunities.

Staff Development in the Public Service (1982-87)



New Ideas Seminars

In 1986-87, two New Ideas Seminars were offered to chief executive officers and senior managers from departments and crown corporations.

In the first seminar, Dr. Lance Secretan conducted a session on "Managerial Moxie", based on his book by the same title. The second seminar featured Dr. George Odiorne, who conducted a one-day session on "A Challenge for Creative Management — Managing in Times of Constraint".

Middle Management Program

A certificate program for middle managers was introduced in 1986-87. A selection committee admitted 73 candidates from 18 departments into the program for the first intake. Candidates are expected to complete six out of eight seminars on topics essential for middle management effectiveness. Topics include: "Managing in the Public Sector", "Financial Management for Non-Financial Managers", "Operational Planning for Managers", "Using Micro-Computers to Manage" and "Managing Communications".

In addition, candidates are assigned a special research project and are given a comprehensive briefing. The program is designed to be taken over a two-year period.

Opportunities for Support Staff

"You Make the Difference" was the theme of the first major conference aimed at support staff. Themes of professionalism and excellence in service were emphasized during the two-day conference, which was attended by 165 support staff from across government.

In 1986-87, 15 new candidates were admitted to the Administrative Development (AD) Program, a certificate program of four to five years in duration, which enables employees in senior clerical or administrative support positions to develop and broaden knowledge and skills of a conceptual nature. A total of 14 participants successfully completed the program and were honoured at a special graduation ceremony. At present, there are 62 active participants enrolled in the program.

2. Maximizing Human Resources

In 1985-86, the Public Service Commission had undertaken a pilot project which provided for decentralized staffing services throughout executive government. A review of this decentralized approach to human resource management took place approximately one year after implementation. The pilot project revealed that decentralization was costly and created a number of coordination problems.

In the present environment of economic restraint, which necessitates the careful management of vacancies and redeployment of employees, the Commission undertook to recentralize all employment and classification services for permanent employees, effective April 1, 1986. This has ensured that the Commission can emphasize fair and equitable hiring practices service-wide, placing priority on redeployment and reemployment of public service employees.

Central Staffing Registry

A Central Staffing Registry was established in July, 1986, to facilitate the placement of employees affected by staff reductions, agency relocation or downward reclassification, as well as those returning from Long-Term Disability, Workers' Compensation or Indefinite Leave of Absence. If no qualified person is identified from the Registry for priority placement, regular recruitment procedures are followed. The Registry also maintains inventories of non-permanent employees who are eligible for placement in the public service.

Committee on Public Service Employment

A committee comprised of senior representatives from three central agencies was established in September of 1986 to address major economic pressures affecting public service employment. The mandate of the Committee includes service-wide coordination of vacancy and attrition management.

The Committee is responsible for reviewing requests from departments to staff all permanent and non-permanent positions and grants staffing approval, if the request is consistent with Cabinet programs and priorities.

In addition, the Committee assesses vacancies and determines job-sharing opportunities and redeployment possibilities. The Committee also supervises and coordinates the functions of the Central Staffing Registry.

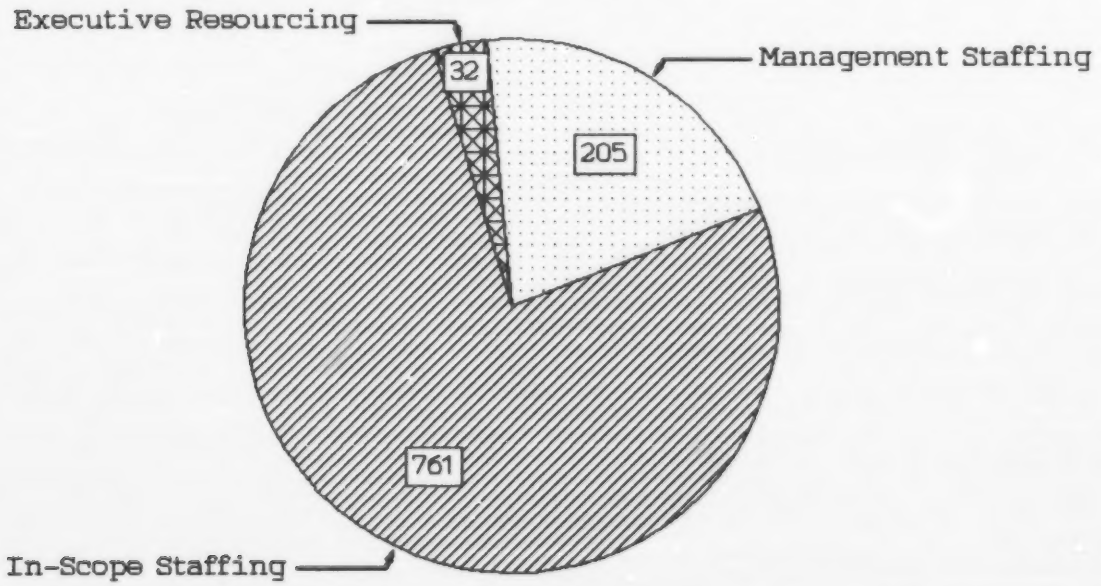
Non-Permanent Resourcing Unit

As part of centralizing all human resource services and to streamline staffing services, the PSC has established a Non-Permanent Resourcing Unit. The unit coordinates all temporary, part-time and summer student hiring government-wide in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Executive Resourcing

The Commission established this unit to provide specialized executive search services to departments and agencies in staffing senior management positions. During the year under review, Executive Resourcing successfully completed 32 staffing actions for senior management and executive positions in the public service.

Staffing Competitions Completed (1986-87)



Total Staffing Competitions Completed: 998

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has been expanded to include an employee-focussed career counselling service. This service includes two-day career planning seminars, in-house counselling through vocational and personality assessments, and referrals to external resources, where appropriate.

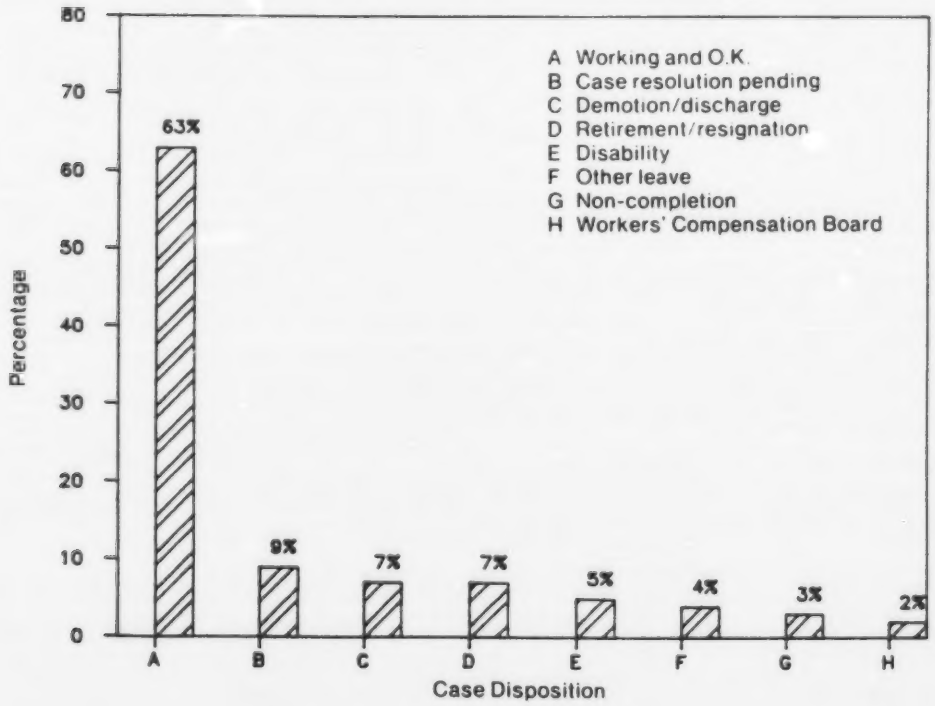
Demand for all services offered through Employee Assistance has dramatically increased over the past year. During 1986-87, 63% of all cases were successfully resolved and employees were able to return to productive employment.

EAP Referrals and Case Consultations 1983-84 to 1986-87

Fiscal year	Referrals	Case consultations to departments	Total
1986-87	100 (48)*	100	200
1985-86	93 (45)	51	144
1984-85	89 (40)	71	160
1983-84	60 (32)	65	125

* *The bracketed figures are employee-initiated or self-referrals.*

Employee Assistance: Status at Year-end



3. Towards Employment Equity

Employment Equity Plan

The PSC has developed and submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission an "interim" Employment Equity Plan which outlines initiatives the government will undertake to increase the representation of three designated groups in public service employment: women, people with physical disabilities and people of native ancestry. Development of the two-year interim plan involved the active participation of and contributions from the majority of government departments and agencies.

Consultations with the unions towards the development of a long-term comprehensive Employment Equity Plan will continue in 1987-88.

Employment Equity Council

An Employment Equity Council has been established, comprised of one appointed Employment Equity Coordinator representing each department. The Council's main mandate is to ensure that employment equity initiatives are carried out in each department. The establishment of the Council has eliminated the need for a centralized unit in the Commission and the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment will take on the responsibility for future overall co-ordination of employment equity initiatives.

4. Reshaping for a New Environment

Management and Professional Classification and Compensation System

In September, 1985, the PSC implemented the Management and Professional Classification and Compensation Plan (M&P Plan) for all managerial and professional out-of-scope positions as the first step in an endeavour to streamline classification systems. Prior to implementation of the new plan, there were 270 classification levels. There are now twelve.

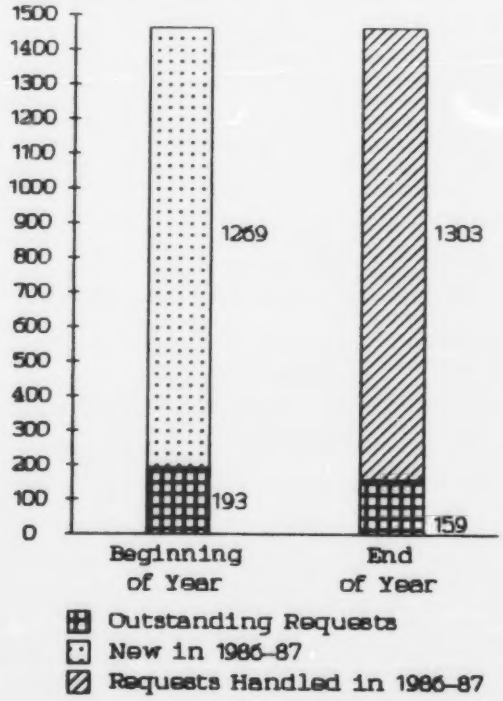
All permanent employees in the new system were afforded the right to appeal their position's allocation. Of the 723 appeals received in the course of fiscal year 1986-87, 220 proceeded to formal hearing, the remaining 503 were withdrawn. The M&P Appeal Committee ruled that 82 per cent of the 220 positions were to remain at the initial allocation level.

Management Support Group Plan

In 1986-87, the Commission completed a review of approximately 230 out-of-scope clerical/secretarial positions, up to and encompassing Deputy Ministers' secretaries. The review was part of an overall effort to update current classification systems and was carried out to recognize and assess the requirements of management support positions, taking into account technological changes and their impact on the work environment. As a result of the review, a new classification and compensation sytem was developed, streamlining 18 current classification levels into 6 new levels. The new classification and compensation plan for the Management Support Group will be implemented on April 1, 1987.

Classification Activity (1986-87)

(In-Scope and Out-of-Scope)



5. Striving for Career Diversification

The Commission is encouraging employees to take advantage of existing and new opportunities for career diversification and mobility. A number of options are being offered by the Commission to public service employees for job enrichment, personal growth and lateral movement.

Career Profiles Inventory

The Commission is maintaining an up-to-date inventory of career profiles for all out-of-scope employees. The career profile forms are completed by employees and contain information on the employee's career history, special skills and desired career path. The forms are used as part of the direct-sourcing process for staffing management positions. Employees are encouraged to update their profile at any time.

Variable Work Hours

To assist employees in meeting their lifestyle needs, the Commission has developed the Variable Work Hours Policy. This approach allows permanent out-of-scope and CUPE 600 employees, who do not wish to work the normal work week, to voluntarily reduce their hours of work to either 50 per cent or 75 per cent of the regular full-time hours. Employees retain permanent status and rights and receive all pay and benefits on a prorated basis.

Education Leave

The Education Leave Policy was revised to ensure that any leaves taken will relate to the departmental and program requirements of the Government of Saskatchewan. To further bring a corporate perspective to education leave requests, the approval process is currently under review and will be modified to include a review of all requests by a committee of deputy ministers.

Deferred Salary Leave Benefit Plan

To assist employees to self-finance paid leave, a Deferred Salary Leave Benefit Plan has been developed. This plan will allow employees, upon management approval, to defer a portion of their salary for a fixed period and, thereafter, take a leave of absence which is financed through the deferred salary. The three main objectives of the plan are to:

- help employees meet personal goals;
- increase possibilities for downsizing and rejuvenation; and
- provide developmental opportunities for employees.

The Commission has requested approval of the plan from Revenue Canada. Implementation cannot proceed until a favourable tax ruling has been received.

Education Leave and Tuition Reimbursement

	Education Leave	Tuition Reimbursement
Requests Approved	55	221
Amount	$505,621	$47,826

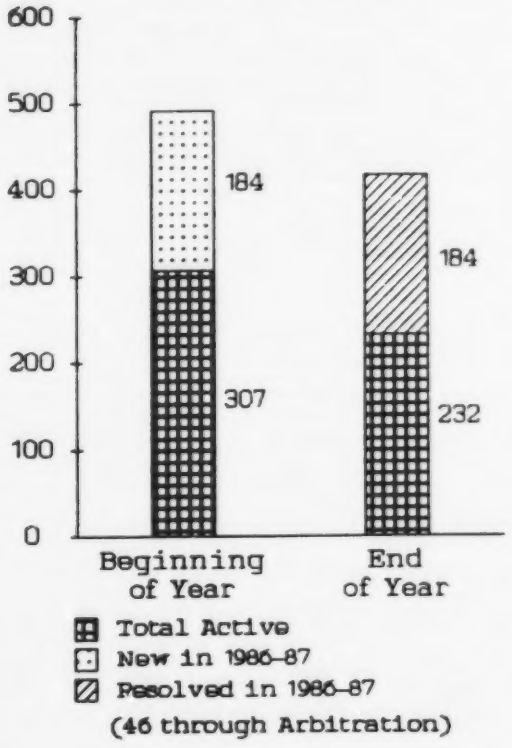
Negotiation of a new collective agreement with the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union commenced on September 24, 1986.

The previous agreement was imposed through Bill 144, enacted by the Legislature in January 1986, after four and one-half months of rotating strikes. The agreement expired on September 30, 1986.

Negotiations with the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 600, will commence in the Fall of 1987.

There were 307 active grievances at the beginning of the year under review. A total of 184 new grievances were received in the course of fiscal year 1986-87 and an equal number of grievances were resolved. There were 232 active grievances at fiscal year end.

Grievances (1986-87)



Unclassified and Excluded Services

In accordance with the provisions of Section 46(2) of *The Public Service Act*, following is a list of positions which have been transferred to the unclassified division of the public service or excluded from the operation of the Act during the 1986-87 fiscal year.

Department	Class
Economic Development and Trade	Chief Trade Negotiator Clerk 4 Executive Director, Trade Secretariat Trade Economist Trade Negotiations Officer
Executive Council	Clerk Typist 3 (3) Clerk Typist 3 (Temporary) Policy Analyst Clerk Stenographer 4 Correspondence Writer
Health	Clerk Stenographer 4 Public Health Nurse 1 (3) Nurse 3
Indian and Native Affairs	Community Liaison Officer
Justice	Student-at-Law (10)
Securities Commission	Deputy Registrar Corporate Review Officer Advisor to the Securities Commission Acting Registrar

IX. Emphasizing Information

The Human Resource System (HRS) is an integrated personnel/payroll system which was jointly developed by the Public Service Commission and the Department of Finance. Implementation throughout the government began in March of 1986 and the personnel portion was fully implemented in all departments and agencies by February, 1987. Implementation of the payroll portion is expected to be completed by August, 1987.

The major features of HRS are:

- control of position establishment and job classification;
- identification of all types of appointments (permanent, part-time, temporary, casual, labour service, non-public service);
- improved response to personnel-related inquiries; and
- up-to-date data base for the analysis of personnel information and to provide bargaining support and compensation research data.

This system represents the single most comprehensive information data bank on employees, positions and other personnel transactions within the public service. It has been identified as another area for future growth, since it provides an excellent resource for management in the decision-making process.

Future Challenges

The main challenge for the Commission will be to assist departments to maintain high employee morale and productivity throughout the organization during a period of economic restraint.

Implementation of downsizing strategies in a humane and dignified manner will depend to a large extent on the cooperation of all departments concerned. Open and timely communication with employees and development of a strategic approach to staff development will be the main thrusts following this process. The PSC will also assume a key responsibility in organization design and effectiveness and promote a positive public image of the public service of Saskatchewan.